DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 933 PS 015 749

TITLE Kindergarten Handbook. For Oregon Public Schools.
INSTITUTION Oregon State Board of Education, Salem.; Oregon State Dept. of Education, Salem.
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 37p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Articulation (Education); *Curriculum Development; Early Childhood Education; *Educational Administration; Educational Planning; Grade Repetition; *Kindergarten; Parent Participation; Program Descriptions; Program Evaluation; *Program Implementation; Public Schools; Staff Development; *State Programs; State Standards
IDENTIFIERS Oregon

ABSTRACT

This handbook contains supportive materials related to administering, planning, and evaluating public kindergarten programs. The main contents of the handbook include information on administering a public kindergarten and planning the kindergarten curriculum. The foreword stresses that the curriculum section is not a complete design but is intended to provide resources to stimulate districts to develop programs responsive to particularized needs. Specific areas covered under administration include the following: administrative steps; staffing; staff development; parent involvement; retention; continuity between grades; self-evaluation; and program implementation. Planning the curriculum includes the following topics: the instructional program; the academic program; and state textbook requirements. Oregon state standards for public school kindergarten also are provided. (DST)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED267933

PS 015749

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Oregon State Dept. of Educ.

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

# foreword

The great goal of elementary education is to help children develop a pattern of learning and responsibility which will serve the student well throughout life.

The kindergarten is the initial entry level to the elementary school in increasing numbers of Oregon schools. Students entering the first grade after attending a kindergarten with a strong developmental program consistently show an advantage over other children in social adjustment and in readiness to learn. The development of public kindergartens may be instrumental in reducing the number of primary school children with special learning difficulties.

While the curriculum section of this handbook is not a complete design, it is hoped that these resources will stimulate districts to develop their own creative programs, responsive to their particular needs.

The State Board of Education and the Department of Education will continue to support the development of early childhood education by supplying districts with supportive materials relating to the administration, planning and evaluation of kindergarten programs. Consultant services in early childhood education are also available to local school districts from the Department. This handbook is intended as a resource tool.

We dedicate this handbook to Jean Spaulding for her many years of leadership and service to the kindergarten movement in Oregon.

Verne A. Duncan
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Title II of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1976); or handicap (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) in educational programs and activities which receive federal assistance. Oregon laws prohibiting discrimination include ORS 659.150 and 659.030. The State Board of Education, furthermore, has adopted Oregon Administrative Rules regarding equal opportunity and nondiscrimination: OARs 581-21-045 through -049 and OAR 581-22-505.

It is the policy of the State Board of Education and a priority of the Oregon Department of Education to ensure equal opportunity in all educational programs and activities and in employment. The Department provides assistance as needed throughout the state's educational system concerning issues of equal opportunity, and has designated the following as responsible for coordinating the Department's efforts:

Title II—Vocational Education Equal Opportunity Specialist

Title VI and Title IX—Coordinator, Title IV, Civil Rights

Section 504—Associate Superintendent, Division of Special Education and Student Services

Inquiries may be addressed to the Oregon Department of Education, 700 Pringle Parkway SE, Salem 97310-0290 or to the Regional Office for Civil Rights, Region X, M/S 106, 2901 Third Avenue, Seattle 98121.



5290319833500

# table of contents

*FOREWORD* ..... iii

*SECTION I: ADMINISTERING A PUBLIC KINDERGARTEN*

**A. Administrative Steps** ..... **1**

1. Authorize a kindergarten program through the local district school board ..... 1
2. Locate the expected number of kindergarten pupils and assess their individual needs ..... 1
3. Assess the need for classroom space and facilities and locate the appropriate resources ... 2
4. Develop a budget for submission to the voters ..... 2
5. Develop job descriptions and employ a kindergarten staff ..... 2
6. Plan an instructional program for the kindergarten ..... 3
7. Plan staff inservice for kindergarten teachers and other employees as needed ..... 3
8. Purchase instructional materials and equipment when authorized by the budget director .... 4
9. Plan a spring registration procedure to provide orientation for prospective students and their parents ..... 4
10. Prepare the kindergarten for the opening of school ..... 4
11. Make plans to provide ongoing communication between parents and teachers about kindergarten children ..... 4

**B. Staffing** ..... **5**

The Administrator ..... 5
The Teacher ..... 5
The Teacher Aide ..... 6
Volunteers ..... 6
Service Personnel ..... 6

**C. Staff Development** ..... **6**

**D. Parental Involvement** ..... **6**

**E. Retention in Kindergarten** ..... **7**

**F. Articulation Between Kindergarten and the Rest of the Primary Grades** ..... **8**

**G. Kindergarten Self-Evaluation** ..... **8**

**H. Getting Off to a Good Start** ..... **9**

General Suggestions for Kindergarten Programs ..... 9
Characteristics of the Five-Year-Old Child ..... 9
Developing a Healthy Self-Concept ..... 10
Looking at Individual Differences ..... 11
Screening Procedures ..... 11
Daily Schedules and Balanced Programs ..... 11

*SECTION II: PLANNING THE KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM*


**A. The Instructional Program** ..... **15**

Program Goals ..... 15
Curriculum Goals ..... 15

**B. The Academic Program** ..... **16**

Language Arts ..... 16
Reading Readiness ..... 17
Writing Readiness ..... 18
Social Studies ..... 19
Health Education ..... 20
Physical Education ..... 21
Art Education ..... 22
Music Education ..... 23
Mathematics ..... 25
Science Education ..... 25

**C. State Textbook Adoption Kindergarten** ..... **26**

*GLOSSARY* ..... 27

*STANDARDS FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN* ..... 29

*PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT* ..... 31

# Administering a Public Kindergarten

section 1


A. Administrative Steps
B. Staffing
C. Staff Development
D. Parental Involvement
E. Retention in Kindergarten
F. Articulation Between Kindergarten and the Rest of the Primary Grades
G. Kindergarten Self-Evaluation
H. Getting Off to a Good Start

# Administrative Steps

Before a local school district takes steps to start a kindergarten program, the basic reason for establishing the program should be stated; this establishes the basic philosophy for program development.

Kindergartens offer a unique opportunity to—

- Provide an instructional program meeting the wide range of social and intellectual differences in children when they come to school.
- Develop each child's learning potential.
- Create an atmosphere in which each child can experience success.
- Provide opportunities for each child to think creatively and express ideas in creative ways.
- Arouse natural curiosity and guide the thinking process.
- Provide satisfying experiences in group living.
- Increase the thinking processes of children in a wide area of intellectual pursuits.

Programs that are designed to provide these opportunities will include—

- Educational experiences for children at all levels of physical and intellectual development.
- Work and play experiences that foster the attitudes and abilities necessary for learning.

Once a local school district is committed to starting a kindergarten program, the following steps will help with implementation.

## 1 Authorize a kindergarten program through the local district school board.

The legal authority for establishing and maintaining kindergartens is contained in ORS 336.092, authorizing local district school boards of any size to implement a public school kindergarten. No public vote is needed to include kindergartens in the regular school program, and the operating budget for the kindergarten will be included in the regular district budget. The school board authorizes kindergartens by establishing them as the entry level to school in an official board action recorded in the minutes.

## 2 Locate the expected number of kindergarten pupils and assess their individual needs.

**Eligibility**: ORS 336.092 defines the kindergarten student as a child in the year before attendance in first grade. The kindergarten should be open to all children of the proper age that reside in the district. Kindergarten attendance is not mandated by the state; the Oregon Compulsory Attendance Law (ORS 339.010) requires children to be in school by the age of seven. Local school districts may make their own regulations regarding school entrance; they may stipulate that all children enter school through kindergarten for assessment and placement, or they may assign children to the kindergarten if they are of eligible age. NOTE: The 1981 legisiature changed the school entrance age to six by September 1 to take effect in 1988. In order to be age eligible for grade 1 in 1988, the kindergartener age will vary each year.

**Assessment of special needs**: The law requires that all district programs be open to all children of the proper age who reside in the district; thus it is possible that any given kindergarten classroom might include children with a wide range of mental and physical abilities, personalities and behavior patterns. Those children who may need the services of special education can be broadly identifiable because of their exceptional abilities; their physical handicaps, including those of sight and hearing; their limitations in academic and social potential and their emotional and psychological responses to the world around them. Consideration must be given to the ways the district can provide an appropriate education for this population.

Any child suspected of needing special education services in order to obtain the education of which he or she is capable should be evaluated by qualified personnel. This is the preliminary step. A handicapped child can usually profit from kindergarten programs without requiring an excessive amount of teacher time; however, if special education services are indicated to carry out the child's prescribed program, they can be provided in a number of ways.

Primarily the child will be expected to remain with the regular group; only in extreme cases should a kindergartener be removed from the usual setting. Oregon law (Chapter 621, Oregon Revised Statute, 1975) stipulates that special education services be given to all eligible handicapped children under 21 years of age, so the Special Education Division of the Department of Education is a prime resource in working out an appropriate program for the young handicapped child in districts that elect to operate preschool programs. A share of the cost of special education services for handicapped young children is reimbursable under the state law. Federal funds are also available for the education of the preschool handicapped. Both federal and state educational agencies endorse the practice of keeping the child in the regular room when possible, either giving him or her on-site service, or removing the child from the classroom for the special education services only. The on-site services can be organized around a dual role of educators; the regular instructor will deliver the general kindergarten program while the special educator will help children in the areas of their particular weaknesses. This teamwork approach to the teaching of all students in an integrated situation and on a diagnostic-instructional basis constitutes a strong approach to the individualized instructional program advocated by the Oregon Department of Education.

In cases where it is not practical to have support services operating in the regular room, a resource room can be set up where the children can go for the special help they require.

Additional information and assistance with children that have special education needs can be obtained through the Division of Special Education Services, Oregon Department of Education (Salem: 378-3598).

## 3 Assess the need for classroom space and facilities and locate the appropriate resources.

**Minimum standards**: Because kindergartens are included as part of the regular elementary school program, the minimum standards for elementary and secondary schools will apply to kindergarten facilities.

**Classroom**: A normally bright, sunny classroom with at least nine hundred square feet of space for each 24 children is highly desirable. The shape of the room is not important, provided that a large unobstructed space is available. Teachers should be able to survey the entire room at once, a consideration affecting the use of room dividers.

**Facilities**: Running water, sinks and drinking fountains should be part of every classroom. Easily supervised toilet facilities located very near the classroom are needed.

**Playground**: The playground areas should provide at least 75 square feet of space for each child. Although playground space may be shared with other primary grades, kindergarten children should have access to the area by themselves for part of the day. Playground safety fences may be required because of nearby traffic hazards.

**Transportation**: Kindergarten children may be transported on public school buses, with reimbursement based on approved cost of transportation. Districts may also arrange for parents to transport kindergarten children to and from school as part of the district's basic transportation plan and claim reimbursement.

## 4 Develop a budget for submission to the voters.

Costs for establishing and maintaining a kindergarten vary so much that it is difficult to generalize about actual figures. Cost estimates should include such items as: capital outlay, transportation, salaries, fixed costs, instructional materials and the program's share of basic costs.

Salaries for teachers and support staff are the biggest item in kindergarten budgets. The cost of support personnel such as a district nurse, a specialist in extreme learning problems, a speech clinician, social workers and guidance specialists will add to basic program costs. This support staff is, however, of great value to a kindergarten program.

## 5 Develop job descriptions and employ a kindergarten staff.

Most authorities in the field suggest one teacher for every 25 children in the primary grades. A kindergarten class with a certificated teacher and an aide for every 20 children provides a better ratio for many group activities. Larger and smaller groups may be organized for specific activities. Sometimes a teacher or support staff may wish to work with one or two children needing special assistance or training.

**Teacher qualifications**: Kindergarten teachers must hold a current valid elementary school certificate. A "teacher" is defined as any certificated employee with direct responsibility for instruction who is paid from public funds (ORS 342.120). It is also advisable to seek teachers who have completed special training in early childhood education and development, meeting the preparation standards suggested by professional organizations. Many graduates of elementary education training in Oregon institutions are now qualified in early childhood education. Teachers should have experience in working with young children under supervision, either in preservice or inservice programs.

Kindergarten teachers should demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the growth and development of young children under six years old. Teachers with personal qualities of empathy, warmth and emotional maturity will contribute to the success of the programs.

**Teacher aides**: Teacher aides may also be employed in kindergarten classrooms. A "teacher aide" is defined as a noncertificated employee whose assignment is limited to assisting a certificated teacher.

## 6 Plan an instructional program for the kindergarten.

**Records and reports**: Records are valuable and necessary. The kindergarten staff should work together to determine the form and type of records that will be most useful to their specific program. Daily records, including detailed accounts of an individual child's activities, can be very valuable if taken over a period of time or at specified intervals throughout the year.

Special consideration must be given to the type of records used in reporting to parents. These records should reflect the philosophy of the district toward kindergarten programs and provide information on the child's development that will assist parents and teachers in working together. Written records, as well as conference procedures, are invaluable in reporting to parents about kindergarten programs.

**Assessment**: Two types of assessment should be considered as part of the kindergarten program: (1) assessment of the individual characteristics of each child and (2) assessment of each child's learning environment, including such factors as the people, space, materials, equipment and time which will provide the best possible learning experiences for an individual child. Assessment of each child is the classroom teacher's primary responsibility, with assistance from counselors, nurses, speech clinicians, psychologists or other members of the support staff.

Assessment should take place early in the kindergarten year and at regular intervals throughout the year for two reasons: (1) individual program design and (2) for making general curriculum decisions about the content, scope and sequence of experiences as well as tempo or pacing in the classroom. Early assessment provides for prompt referral of children with special problems, talents or gifts to professional services within the school and elsewhere in the community.

**Diagnosis and prescription**: Assessment of individual characteristics and the optimum learning environment for each child will aid in the diagnosis of the strengths and limitations of each learner. This analysis of each child's learning potential leads to the development of a prescriptive learning program, designed specifically for the individual child.

Planning curriculum through assessment, diagnosis and prescription will result in optimum learning opportunities for each child. Specific suggestions for kindergarten curriculum in the major subject areas are contained in the second half of this handbook.

**Planning steps**: Suggested steps for developing a curriculum program for kindergarten include: (1) establishing program goals and priorities; (2) developing instructional guidelines; (3) involving primary teachers from kindergarten, first and second grade levels in the selection of activities and materials; (4) incorporating curriculum plans with a diagnostic-prescriptive analysis of the individual prospective students and (5) providing for articulation between kindergarten and the primary grades. Articulation should be carefully planned to provide a continuum of growth throughout the early childhood education years.

## 7 Plan staff inservice for kindergarten teachers and other employees as needed.

Teachers of kindergarten and the other primary grades need opportunities to plan together to provide for a continuum of growth throughout the early childhood education years (kindergarten through the third grade). Teachers need to know, through first-hand experience, what is happening at each level of early childhood education. Inservice programs for all early childhood education teachers will help the staff to respond to the different rates of development in each child and allow them to progress along a continuum that is unfettered by labels segregating kindergarten activities from the other levels.

## 8 Purchase instructional materials and equipment when authorized by the budget director.

**Suggested equipment and materials**: Keeping in mind the ways in which children learn, selection of materials and equipment should be made on the basis of some of the following considerations:

- Contributions to implementation of goals
- Ability to suggest construction projects and inspire creative expression
- Ability to arouse curiosity and interest
- Safety, stability and freedom from sharp corners and splintering
- Provision for physical activity and manipulation
- Ability to suggest dramatic play and communication of ideas
- Suitability of materials and equipment for group and individual use

The use of appropriate equipment and materials, when wisely chosen by teachers and administrators, can foster development in the important educational objectives of resourcefulness, creativity, responsibility, independence and social and motor skills. A list of suggestions for basic kindergarten materials and equipment is found later in this handbook.

## 9 Plan a spring registration procedure to provide orientation for prospective students and their parents.

Plans for spring registration should include notification of parents, information and orientation for parents and children, schedules for registration and transportation, and provisions for a health checkup. Plans should also be made for registration of children who are eligible, but cannot preregister.

**Enrollment**: An enrollment record generally includes the child's full name; parents' names, addresses and phone numbers and the family physician's name, address and phone number for notification in an emergency. Other information useful to the school such as the bus number or symbol may, of course, be added.

**Immunization and health checkup**: ORS 339.010 requires that children between five and fourteen years of age be immunized for specified communicable diseases before they enroll in any public, private or parochial school. The State Health Division specifies the immunization required, and the law states that children who fail to comply will be excluded from the school. Exceptions are granted in the following cases: immunization may endanger the health of a child in certain cases; parents or guardians may certify that immunization is contrary to their religious beliefs; parents may sign an agreement to arrange privately for immunization within 30 days. The publication, *Health Services for the School Age Child*, also recommends that a physical examination be obtained by every pupil prior to initial entrance into school. Information is available from the county health department.

**Orientation program**: Support of the administration will help the teacher in developing an ongoing program that involves both the parents and children. Teachers may visit parents in the home or invite them to school during the week prior to the opening of kindergarten classes. Teachers can encourage parents to share information about their children's early life and to take an active part in the educational process.

Clearly written records should be developed and available to the public. Records should contain school policies concerning entrance requirements and registration procedures, requirements for health records and birth certificates, special fees, transportation requirements and school schedules. Also, groundwork should be laid toward building pertinent information in the child's confidential file.

## 10 Prepare the kindergarten for the opening of school.

The final preparation steps include making necessary adjustments in classroom facilities, planning shortened school days and staggered enrollment during the first week of school and developing an identification plan for children and their school buses.

## 11 Make plans to provide ongoing communication between parents and teachers about kindergarten children.

Parents and teachers can share their knowledge of the child's development through scheduled room meetings, parent visits to the classroom, individual parent conferences and telephone conversations with parents who cannot come to school. Children can be encouraged to take materials home to share with their parents; newsletters to parents can also report on the school activities. Teachers can establish a "parent center" in the classroom, where parents may find reading and resource materials on early childhood education, enjoy a cup of coffee and hold informal conversations with members of the school staff.

# Staffing

## The Administrator

The administrator has an important role in establishing and maintaining a good kindergarten program for the school community. In order to do this he (or she) will need to—

- Develop a philosophy of kindergarten education based on reliable research in child growth and development.
- Provide a skilled, professional, competent teacher.
- Provide an appropriate learning environment.
- Plan with kindergarten teachers effective orientation experiences involving parents and children.
- Provide special services for those young children needing help in areas which require the assistance of such professionals as school health nurse, speech therapist, psychologist and others.
- See that meaningful and useful information is kept for the continuous growth and development of the whole child.
- Interpret the learning/teaching situations of the kindergarten program to members of the staff, other administrators, parents and community.
- Strive with the teachers to involve parents in the total school program to keep the lines of communication open.
- Provide resource assistance, and time, for teachers to carry on curriculum study through such means as inservice programs, attendance at state and national meetings, intervisitation and intravisitation.
- Participate as a member of the professional team in the continuous development and implementation of effective learning programs.
- Coordinate learning/teaching situations involving home, nursery schools, Head Start and primary grades for the development of a sequential program.
- Continuously assess the goals and objectives of the learning/teaching situations with the kindergarten teacher and the other supportive personnel.
- Acquaint the community with the kindergarten goals.

## The Teacher

The teacher's role is a professional one. The role and responsibilities will vary greatly depending on the goals for the program, organizational and staffing patterns. Generally, the teacher has the responsibility for:

- Setting goals and objectives. Assessment of the child's behavior (with the help of other specialists when needed).
- Detection-diagnosis of strengths and possible limitations in the basic behavioral repertoire of individual children in order to plan instruction (both enrichment and remedial).
- The development of a profile of the kindergarten group as a whole in making curriculum decisions regarding content.
- Implementation of the program based on identified needs of children and the goals of the program.
- Periodic assessment throughout the year to determine pupil progress and overall kindergarten effectiveness in relation to goals and objectives.
- Making professional decisions.
- Good management of time, space, materials, children and other adults involved.
- Coordinating efforts of all persons involved.
- Implementing and/or initiating change and innovation.

## The Teacher Aide

The teacher aide, as a member of the staff, works under the guidance of the professional teacher. Usually this person is not professionally prepared (certificated), but may have learned some skills in courses, workshops and orientation training programs. Limiting teacher aides to custodial functions in the classroom is not always the most effective use of their talents. Aides can learn many of the technical aspects of teaching, and under guidance, can learn to work effectively with children. They must always, however, be working under the direction of a certificated teacher.

## Volunteers

In addition to paid teacher aides, volunteers also may be used in the classroom as aides. A volunteer may be a parent of a child in the program or may come from outside the community. Older high school or college students may also serve as teacher aides. An orientation program for volunteers is desirable. Volunteers carefully selected, prepared and assisting regularly, can make significant contributions.

## Service Personnel

Many other persons may be called upon to work with the children and their families. The professionally trained teacher has the responsibility for coordinating the work of all specialists and persons involved:

- Social workers might work directly with families and parent groups or provide liaison with welfare agencies.
- Psychologists could: (1) make assessments of a child's behavior through observation and testing; (2) provide information to the teacher; (3) recommend use of additional resources.
- A home-school liaison person may work directly with the families and parent groups, taking development tasks appropriate for the child and parents to do together. This person may or may not be professionally prepared other than through a special orientation training program.
- Health personnel including doctors, dentists and nurses might be involved in the program.
- Special teachers and therapists could deal with particular problems.
- Cooks, custodians and bus drivers may also be used to extend services to children.

# *Staff Development*

All agencies in our society are affected by change; schools are no exception. It is, therefore, important that administrators plan for the continuing development of teachers and other staff members. Well planned inservice programs make it possible for all personnel, both beginning and experienced teachers, to keep abreast of new approaches and directions in education relevant to the teaching and learning experience.

Staff development must be considered a career-long process. It includes additional formal preparation, as well as school and community activities, which increase the competence and effectiveness of teachers as they work with children, colleagues and the community.

School administrators and teachers should work together to plan and carry out staff development activities. Such activities should be directed toward improvement of the school program and professional development of staff.

# *Parental Involvement*

All elements in a child's environment influence his/her learning and development: school, family, neighborhood and community. It is important that these persons and agencies work together effectively to minimize adverse and emphasize positive influences.

Administrators, teachers, parents and other community persons may explore ways to open up the school and community to each other. Interaction between parents and the educational staff can help parents learn how they can best support and influence the program, and, on their own, contribute more

fully to their child's total development. Interaction will also help staff respond to the needs and goals of the parents and community.

To encourage participation and involvement:

1. Teachers can enlist and strengthen the cooperation of the parents and the community with the school:
   a. Parent interaction within the kindergarten— working with individual children to meet their needs; participating in interest centers; listening and recording children's oral reading; reading stories to children.
   b. Parent contribution as community members—introducing local industries; sharing hobbies and special interests; exploring various occupations.
2. Teachers can develop an environment that encourages a two-way communication. Communication with bilingual families may require interpreter assistance. Effective procedures include:
   a. Conferences involving parents, teachers and children
   b. Home contacts—visiting homes, coordinating small group home meetings and parent interest activities
   c. Other—telephoning information, sending personal notes, coordinating room newsletters and organizing meetings.

# Retention in Kindergarten

In view of the demonstrated value of pupil retention in a grade, when appropriate, and the sensitive reaction of most parents to this, the teacher should consult with the principal prior to introducing the possibility of retention. It may be necessary to request the assistance of the school nurse or counselor to further evaluate the child.

Some factors to consider in grade placement:

*Academic Achievement*—Does the child:

- Listen attentively
- Show an interest in learning
- Show proper care of materials
- Express thoughts and ideas well
- Follow simple directions
- Have good work habits
- Have some concept of:
  - Auditory discrimination
  - Visual discrimination
  - Letter names
  - Sets and numbers
  - Likenesses and differences

*Mental Ability*—Is the child:

- As mature as most kindergarten children
- Capable of doing the work

*Chronological Age*—Is the child:

- A younger or older kindergartener according to birth date

*Physical Development and Health*—Is the child:

- Small or large in size
- Healthy
- Physically handicapped in any way
- Well coordinated (small and large muscle development)

*Social Maturity*—Is the child:

- Considerate of others
- Respectful, courteous and cooperative

*Emotional Stability and School Adjustment*—Is the child:

- Positive in attitudes toward school
- Able to practice self-control
- Able to act independently in thought and action
- Able to cope with success or failure

Two types of grade assignments may be considered:

- After a very thorough study, a *conditional promotion* can be made when professional questions exist about proper grade placement relative to the child's ability to succeed during the following year. This conditional promotion should be evaluated before the end of the first report card period.
- A *retention* can be made when it is objectively demonstrated that the child could profit most by extending and reinforcing his/her skills at the kindergarten level. Final approval must be

obtained from the parents, who should understand that the child's future school progress may depend upon his/her successful learning experiences in these early school years.

Some schools establish a half-step program or junior primary, enrolling a child as a first grader, but establishing a simpler program. Some children will soon be able to do regular first grade work. These children will be promoted to second grade at the end of the year. Others will need more time and will be enrolled a second year in first grade.

## Articulation Between Kindergarten and the rest of the Primary Grades

Kindergarten is the first year of the primary grades. The primary grades, K through 3, form one unit in the broad term "early childhood education." Programs for three- and four-year-olds are identified as prekindergarten. Early education is defined in Oregon law as an educational program approved by the Department of Education for children between the third and ninth birthdays.

Articulation should be carefully planned to provide a continuum of growth throughout the early childhood education years. Teachers of kindergarten and first grade need opportunities to plan together to achieve articulation. Each needs to know, often through viewing firsthand, what is happening at the other's level of education.

Educators need to be aware of children as individuals having different rates of development, different styles of operating in a classroom and different educational needs. Diagnosing these individual needs, and providing for these needs, are steps toward better articulation. Artificially set grade levels become less important, as children are allowed to progress along a continuum unfettered by labels segregating kindergarten activities from other primary activities. (ORS 336.095, 343.415 and 343.425)

## Kindergarten Self-Evaluation

Teachers and administrators often ask for a quick overall evaluation of their kindergarten program. The following questions are offered as a quick, informal way to do a self-evaluation.

Does our kindergarten—

- Give each child maximum assurance at the initial entry level?
- Help each child learn to think?
- Allow time to develop self-dependence and introduce good study habits?
- Know how and when to ask an adult for help?
- Help children expand their knowledge, be well informed, learn how to get and use information?
- Develop oral language as a satisfying means of communication and expression?
- Provide space, equipment and materials for a variety of learning activities?
- Have a qualified teacher? Has the teacher had training in early childhood education?

Does the instructional program:

- Include oral language experiences?
- Include many experiences in mathematics with concrete objects and other kinds of "hands on" experiences, but also introduce print numerals?
- Include beginning experiences in print in the reading readiness program?
- Introduce children to a phonics program?
- Introduce children to the pleasures of singing, rhythm and other aspects of music education?
- Provide satisfying, aesthetic experiences in the visual arts?

# Getting Off to a Good Start

## General Suggestions for Kindergarten Programs

**Plans for curricular activities**: Early childhood curriculum should include activities that are appropriate for young children and that will lay the foundation for later instruction. For example, general activities that will contribute to learning in science are: **observing** the characteristics of objects and living things in the environment; **classifying** and **categorizing** distinctive features of these observations and **describing** the relationship between things that are observed. These activities begin to build the concepts needed by young children to understand scientific interpretations of their world.

Solving practical, everyday problems may help to develop basic concepts for later learning in all academic disciplines. If teachers are aware of the basic understandings that can be appropriately developed with young children, they will be in a better position to select and guide their activities.

Many different opportunities to interact with a rich and challenging environment will provide children with a stable orientation toward new learning experiences. Animals, plants, rocks and all such realia must be present in the programs and used effectively. Children need opportunities to interact with people, to take field trips that will broaden their experience and to have visual media bring more of the world to them.

A curriculum designed to foster children's ability to think and conceptualize should be balanced in content. Activities in reading readiness or other basic skill areas should not be overemphasized to the exclusion of real experiences that foster understanding of science, mathematics, music, language and the arts through "hands on" experiences.

**Goals for kindergarten programs**: A major goal of kindergarten programs is to develop each child's individual potential within the framework of society. The kindergarten program should also promote readiness for more formal instruction, supplementing the home environment and assisting each child in making a gradual and enjoyable adjustment to school.

A good kindergarten program should help children to—

- Develop an interest in, and experience the joy of learning.
- Establish satisfying relationships with children and adults.
- Extend their understanding of social interaction.
- Further their physical development.
- Maintain and develop optimum mental health.
- Know and enjoy their cultural heritage through literature, music, the performing and fine arts.
- Grow in understanding of spatial and quantitative relationships.
- Develop an understanding of the natural environment.
- Develop a capacity for aesthetic expression.

## Characteristics of the Five-Year-Old Child

Awareness of fundamental needs and interests of children at each age level is essential to planning program activities to meet objectives.

Although growth is continuous and follows an orderly sequence, it occurs in varying rates for each child. Growth is cumulative, with each stage of devel-

opment influencing the stages which follow. Because individuals grow at their own particular rate, there are marked individual differences among children. A normal kindergarten class will be composed of children who possess characteristics common to four-, five- or six-year-olds even though they may have the same chronological age.

The following characteristics describe the average five-year-old:

**Physical**

- Grows rapidly
- Is active but tires easily
- Has a short attention span
- Has better control over large muscles than small muscles
- Generally has developed hand preference
- Has difficulty focusing eyes sharply on an object; may not at this point have 20-20 vision
- Is learning to control an increasing number of language forms
- Is susceptible to communicable diseases and common colds

**Intellectual**

- Is learning to listen purposefully and without interruption
- Is highly imaginative and creative
- Is curious about the world in which he/she lives, expands experimentation and control of communication
- Learns through use of the five senses
- Learns by doing, imitating, observing, exploring, examining, investigating, experimenting and questioning
- Learns through concrete and direct experiences rather than abstractions
- Has limited power to learn, organize, generalize and draw relationships

**Social**

- Is ready and eager for new experiences
- Seeks companionship of other children
- Is an attentive observer or eager participant
- Is ready to share and work with others
- Is curious about his/her world as it relates to him/her
- Is eager to gain approval

**Emotional**

- Needs a sense of belonging
- Needs a feeling of security
- Has a strong emotional link with home and family
- Is growing in emotional stability
- Is developing a self-image
- Is developing inner self-control

## Developing a Healthy Self-Concept

Five-year-old children are usually ready to expand their knowledge of the world, broadening horizons from home to school. Experiences in kindergarten provide an opportunity to experiment, explore and make discoveries relating to the environment. To do this, however, children must have a healthy self-concept.

Thinking well of oneself implies the acceptance of one's feelings. Young children need the support of an understanding adult in learning to deal with feelings of anger, insecurity, frustration and fear. Developing a sense of trust in others, and accepting oneself as a worthy person—able to do things—becomes an extremely important goal when one remembers that future personality development depends on this.

There are many ways a teacher can build confidence in children. In a warm, friendly classroom atmosphere, the child becomes aware that the teacher is sensitive to personal anxieties and fears, yet wants each child to succeed. Positive feelings: joy, happiness, security and delight can be reinforced. The teacher should encourage:

- Open-mindedness
- Acceptance of self and others
- Satisfaction in accomplishment
- Joy in discovery
- Acceptance of responsibility for group membership
- Acceptance of constructive criticism

The teacher can use the following approaches to help each child:

- Setting goals for the child, designed for immediate success
- Exposing the child to people with different roles, backgrounds and values
- Using challenging equipment and materials
- Helping each child toward self-evaluation
- Giving each child a wide range of choice
- Providing freedom to experiment, explore and discover

Another need in early childhood is to develop a sense of autonomy. The feeling of being a person with the abilities to "be big" and do things for oneself is necessary to the young child. Programs should provide many opportunities to feel confident and happy with their accomplishments.

Research has provided us with many techniques for helping children become aware of themselves. Personal photographs and songs containing the child's name can help children become aware of themselves as individuals.

A child needs to feel important as an individual. Success in one's own "specialty" leads to positive self-confidence. This can be achieved with any skill, even one so simple as twirling a rope. Children need to be aware that the discipline in the classroom is consistent, fair and reasonable. This also helps them to cope with the world around them.

To conclude: Every child has three basic needs—to be loved and respected, to belong and to experience success and accomplishment.

## Looking at Individual Differences

Programs planned for young children should be flexible enough to provide whatever individual attention is needed to enhance intellectual, emotional, social and physical development. Each child should be allowed to develop through his/her own style and pace.

The teacher will need to become aware of the unique characteristics of each child—his/her interests, needs and abilities.

Materials for assessment are varied. Assessment tools should be simple and appropriate for the age and development of the child or group of children concerned. Results should help to plan the best program possible for each child.

## Screening Procedures

A screening program is a means of looking at all young children to better understand their diversity and to detect physical, behavioral and educational problems that may interfere with success in school.

Children found to have marked developmental variability should be referred for further diagnostic testing. In discussing screening results with parents, be very clear that parents understand that no diagnosis has been made, but that screening results indicate a need for further testing to determine if a problem actually exists. Sensitive reporting of screening results to parents is intended to involve them as fully as possible in the follow-up educational program in the home and at school. It is not a procedure to determine eligibility for school. In Oregon, children residing in the district and of eligible age for a program are entitled to admission and schooling.

## Daily Schedules and Balanced Programs

Young children need programs that are balanced in many ways. For example:

- Exploration and discovery balanced by teacher-directed activities
- Individual activities balanced by group activities
- Creative arts balanced by the content fields
- Listening balanced by being listened to
- Vigorous play balanced by less active play
- Large muscle activities balanced by small muscle activities
- Firsthand experiences balanced by vicarious experiences
- Outdoor activities balanced by indoor activities
- A balance between the four phases of development: physical, social, emotional and intellectual

Balance is not achieved by giving equal weight but by appropriate weighing of each part of the program.

### Time Schedule

Kindergarten children, often for the first time, face the requirements of adjusting to group plans and routines. Too rigid a program early in the year may prove frustrating to the child. However, a five-year-old does need the security of an orderly environment. An easy, flexible program gives the child freedom to plan and carry out ideas, to experiment with materials, to further social growth in group living and to develop as an individual within the group.

Children need to change activities often, especially during the first weeks of kindergarten—alternate short spans of work, play, quiet time etc. They can progress from a great deal of active time to a more formal classroom atmosphere as the year progresses.

# Planning the Kindergarten Curriculum

A. The Instructional Program
B. The Academic Program
C. State Textbook Adoption Kindergarten

section 2

# the Instructional Program

No single curriculum or program plan can or should be devised to meet the varying requirements of every community, school, teacher or child. The ultimate responsibility for planning for each individual group will reside with the kindergarten teacher. Many teachers will find it advisable to experiment with a variety of ideas and plans and to work toward evolvement of an eclectic model. Any model should be based upon one's own experiences, and the steadily accumulating body of knowledge about children—how they grow and develop, and the ways in which they learn about themselves in the rapidly expanding world.

The key to a dynamic program for young children is a creative, resourceful teacher with a zest for learning and living. The importance of actively involving parents, teacher aides and other adults within the community in the planning and operation of the kindergarten program is becoming increasingly clear.

A good day for a kindergarten child needs to be vital, satisfying and "mind stretching" without being overstimulating or threatening. He/she needs a program in which play is valued for the learning opportunities which it can provide, and for which there is ample time and equipment. A child can grow best in an atmosphere in which uniqueness and originality are prized, one in which creativity is welcomed and fostered.

## Program Goals

For all children, kindergartens provide experiences in—

1. Developing feelings of self-worth.
2. Meeting particular interests, levels of performance and basic needs.
3. Encouraging responsibility toward self, others and one's environment.
4. Fostering individual growth rates.
5. Releasing and promoting creativity.
6. Facilitating learning by finding relationships.
7. Promoting exploration and discovery.
8. Discussing, planning, problem-solving, concluding and evaluating outcomes.
9. Encouraging learning at the school setting.
10. Recognizing the importance of learning acquired at home and in the community.
11. Utilizing resource people from the local and business communities.

## Curriculum Goals

### Social Skills

The student—

- Assumes both leadership and membership roles in a group.
- Respects differences among people.
- Takes turns and shares.
- Works and plays cooperatively with others.
- Expresses personal needs.
- Obeys school and class rules.
- Learns politeness and consideration of others.
- Respects classroom materials and equipment of others.
- Understands and accepts choices and consequences.

### Emotional Skills

The student—

- Develops feelings of security and self-confidence.

- Adjusts to changes in daily routine.
- Makes choices, completes tasks and solves simple problems.
- Exhibits an awareness of self as a unique individual.
- Expresses feelings and emotions in an acceptable manner.
- Recognizes that everyone makes mistakes.
- Develops a growing sense of humor.
- Develops a positive attitude toward self and others.

**Physical Skills—Gross Motor**

The student—

- Performs basic body movement, i.e., walking, running, hopping, jumping, galloping, skipping, etc.
- Knows and moves designated parts of body.
- Identifies right and left parts of body.
- Coordinates the movements of his/her whole body.
- Performs balancing skills.
- Develops ball skills, i.e., throwing, catching, kicking, etc.
- Develops rhythmic skills, i.e., clapping, marching, echoing, etc.

**Physical Skills—Fine Motor**

The student—

- Uses eye-hand coordination to perform tasks, i.e., cutting, pasting, tearing, etc.
- Demonstrates the fine motor skills of drawing, writing and painting.
- Manipulates a variety of concrete materials, i.e., puzzles, games, clay, snaps, buttons, shoelaces, etc.

**Study Skills**

The student—

- Interacts appropriately with peers and adults.
- Develops an attention span adequate for assigned tasks.
- Seeks the help of an adult when appropriate.
- Follows directions, makes decisions, responds appropriately.
- Works cooperatively.
- Works independently.
- Uses time appropriately.

# *the Academic Program*

The use of methods of instruction appropriate to young children is as important as the context of the program. Methods will vary with the desires of the district, the training of the teacher and the selection of state adopted materials and other supplementary materials and equipment used in the classroom.

A variety of teaching methods with an emphasis on "hands on" activities rather than paper and pencil exercises is basic when working with five- and six-year-olds. Oral language skills are important in all so-called subject areas.

Expectations will differ with the type of materials used and the goals for a program established by the district. An outline of skills is listed to help districts in developing balanced but inclusive programs.

## Language Arts

The purpose of a language arts program is to enable children to communicate with others and enjoy using language, both in oral and written forms. The purpose is best met through a program that allows for open communication between children and adults and between children and children. The role of the teacher is to support, enhance and encourage a rich language environment and to provide an appropriate language model.

**Language Skills**

1. To increase children's receptive and expressive vocabulary so they can:
   - Compare
   - Classify

- Show relationships
- Name things
- Describe objects and actions

2. To increase a student's ability to express a thought in more than one form, e.g., in words, pictures, action.
3. To develop the ability to narrate events in sequence:
   - Retell a story
   - Recount an experience
   - Report an observed event
   - Invent a story with a sequence
4. To be able to perform three acts in sequence as directed.
5. To be able to answer who, where, what, why and when questions.
6. To be able to ask questions.
7. To be able to differentiate between questions and statements.
8. To use language to resolve conflict, to make requests, to gain information, to share information, to speak in complete sentences with appropriate order for the reference group.
9. Listening—Develop appropriate auditory or listening skills in children to enhance their auditory memory and discrimination skills in a classroom. For example:
   - Name or recount sounds heard
   - Imitate sounds heard
   - Ability to respond appropriately to what another has said
   - Ability to identify sounds
   - Ability to recall

## Reading Readiness

**Maturity and reading**: While the kindergarten teacher cannot endow children with increased mental capacity, the teacher can and does help them to use the intellectual capacity they possess in advantageous ways. The teacher can provide opportunity to: reason, solve problems, make decisions, follow directions in sequence and concentrate on one activity for increasing lengths of time. Children need to learn these processes in order to successfully pursue the first-grade reading skills.

**Experiential background and reading**: The richness of children's experiential background, providing them with information and concepts, is closely related to their ability to think. Many studies show a favorable relationship between background experience and reading ability. The kindergarten contributes generously to experiential growth through activities such as nature excursions to see birds, squirrels, trees, ice, frost, dew, spiderwebs, anthills, etc.; industrial excursions to visit a creamery, a bakery, a fire station, a railroad yard, etc.; experiences with raw materials such as making jelly, butter, gingerbread, etc.; construction activities such as building a village with houses, stores, churches, schools or making a park with trees, flowers, a lake, boats, a zoo, etc.

**Emotional and social maturity and reading**: Numerous studies have revealed a high relationship between reading success and emotional maturity. What happens in the kindergarten that promotes emotional and social growth? The teacher is alert to the symptoms of timidity, aggression, fear and the need for success and approval. Each child needs help in developing his or her own needs. In group work, the children learn that their own interests are best fulfilled through cooperative effort toward common goals and the sharing of interests and ideas. These emotional and social experiences provide substantial help when the child undertakes the formal reading process.

**Language development and reading**: The ability to listen to a story and supply a reasonable ending is one of the best predictors of success in reading. Plentiful evidence shows that development in the other language arts is closely tied to reading development. Consequently, activities that promote vocabulary enrichment, correct English usage, fluent speaking and good listening in kindergarten will contribute to reading development. The kindergarten teacher can do many things to encourage language development, including: provide a friendly, rich and interesting environment that encourages children to talk; give them firsthand experiences to talk about; invite them to relate personal experiences, retell stories and make up their own stories and poems. In doing all these things, the teacher helps each child develop the language facility needed for successful learning in reading.

**Informal contacts with reading**: The teacher can plan to emphasize written language by: (1) placing memorandums on the chalkboard or writing orders for school snacks, writing the names of committees and their members, listing simple rules and simple directions for some activity like making applesauce (pare, wash, cook, sweeten) and (2) placing surprise sentences on the bulletin board each morning, such as "Susan will bring her pet rabbit tomorrow." Let the children try to guess what the surprise is, then read it to them.

The teacher can call attention to printed material on walks or excursions—the names on packages in store windows; signs on store buildings; names of streets; names on trucks, street cars and buses; danger signs and so on. The teacher should frequently let children see their own words flow into printed symbols as she writes them on chalkboard or tagboard. Every opportunity should be used to write as the children watch; write notices, plans, suggestions and directions which they have composed. While the children should not be required to read the words, phrases or sentences, they will have the valuable experience of seeing meanings which grow out of their own experiences.

**Skills**

The student—

- Obtains ideas from pictures and stories.
- Learns to handle books properly.
- Develops a wholesome attitude toward reading.
- Acquires readiness skills by:
  - Matching
  - Labeling
  - Classification
  - Sequencing
  - Rhyming
  - Left to right eye movement, etc.
  - Closure
- Develops symbolic skills by:
  - Recognizing own name in print
  - Naming upper-case letters
  - Naming lower-case letters
  - Matching upper-case and lower-case letters
  - Associating printed words with objects
  - Grouping spoken words by the final sounds
  - Grouping spoken words by the initial sounds
  - Recognizing final sounds in spoken words
  - Recognizing initial sounds in spoken words
  - Associating letters with their most frequent sounds
- Develops comprehension skills by:
  - Following directions involving spatial relationship words: under, over, in, out, near, far, up, down, left, right, front, back, top, bottom, above, below, inside, outside, beginning, end, on, off, before, after
  - Understanding opposites: (see words above)
  - Recalling main idea and main characters from a short story or a picture
  - Recalling details from a short story or picture
  - Identifying cause and effect relationship in stories, events or pictures
  - Predicting outcomes in stories, events or pictures
  - Drawing inferences from stories, events or pictures
  - Distinguishing reality from fantasy
  - Creating stories based on a described or pictured situation

## Writing Readiness

Kindergarten children can be given many opportunities to experiment with and pursue their awakening interest in writing. Foundation experiences for writing are provided by many large muscle activities—climbing, balancing, building with large blocks and rhythm activities. These experiences promote gains in the large muscle coordination involved in writing. While all children should be exposed to the writing readiness program, some children will actually pursue writing activities. Beginning writing must be supervised to avoid establishing incorrect habits.

Experiences that provide opportunities for the development of dexterity and coordination are:

- Finger painting, brush painting
- Drawing on paper and chalkboard
- Operating the clips and implements that hold paper on the easel
- Washing paintbrushes and other equipment
- Pasting, cutting and tearing paper
- Modeling with clay and other media
- Using hammer and nails and other woodwork tools
- Using a paper punch
- Lacing shoes, tying knots and bows on shoes and work aprons
- Buttoning and unbuttoning, zipping and unzipping, snapping and unsnapping, hooking and unhooking fastenings on their own clothes, doll clothes or costume clothes
- Picking up and sorting out such things as seeds, spilled pins, thumbtacks or other small items
- Picking out tunes on the piano
- Operating the record player
- Handling science equipment and pets
- Manipulating pegs, form insets, puzzles and beads
- Manipulating such play materials as small interlocking and snap blocks
- Turning the pages of a book
- Handing out cards for matching games
- Posting pictures with thumbtacks or pins
- Arranging figures on felt or magnetic boards
- Handling, manipulating and even spelling out words with molded form letters
- Constructing with unit and hollow blocks

Some experiences that will help children realize that writing is a means of identification are:

- Putting signs on construction projects
- Recognizing labels on equipment
- Having names on work
- Seeing captions on bulletin boards

The following experiences will help children with the techniques of manuscript writing:

- Learning left-to-right
  - Observing the teacher demonstrate left-to-right movement in using books and charts
  - Viewing a sequence of pictures from left-to-right
- Observing the teacher write correctly
  - Using capitals and small letters properly
  - Demonstrating good letter formation
  - Placing letters on a horizontal line
- Drawing readiness figures
- Learning to make circles
- Learning to make straight lines from top to bottom and from left-to-right
- Learning to write own name on the chalkboard and on paper (if ready)
- Learning to write the manuscript letters correctly (if ready)

The following techniques apply to writing activities for right- and left-handed children:

- **Right-handed child**: The right-handed child should turn the paper about 15 degrees left and place it slightly to the right of the center of the body. The child should sit well back in the desk with elbows just off the edge. The crayon or pencil should be held about an inch from the writing point between the thumb and second finger, with the index finger resting lightly on top. The child should be taught to hold the crayon or pencil lightly between the thumb and second finger first, and then to drop the first finger on top of the crayon.

- **Left-handed child**: The left-handed child should turn the paper slightly to the right and place it slightly to the right of the center of the body.

**Skills in Beginning Handwriting**

The student—

- Distinguishes top from bottom.
- Follows top-to-bottom progression.
- Distinguishes left from right.
- Follows left-to-right progression.
- Recognizes basic shapes in an object or picture.
- Names basic writing strokes: top-to-bottom, left-to-right, slant left, slant right, backward circle, forward circle.
- Recognizes basic writing strokes in an object or picture.
- Traces and writes basic strokes.
- Traces upper- and lower-case letters and numerals 0-10.
- Writes name beginning with initial upper-case letter.

## Social Studies

The growth of social concepts in the young child begins with self-understanding as an individual. The young child's concept of membership in the large society is gradually developed by experiences that create familiarity with the neighborhood and adult roles in the community. The rudiments of history, geography, economics and the other social sciences are also rooted in these experiences.

Considerations in the selection of social studies activities include—

- Helping the child relate school experiences to home and community situations.
- Developing understanding of the importance of school in the child's life.
- Increasing the child's awareness of the need to follow rules and regulations developed for the benefit of a group.
- Developing the child's self-respect and an understanding of roles of the individual in a group.
- Involving children as eager participants in school activities and helping them to appreciate the roles of school personnel.
- Helping the child recognize the value of our resources and our responsibilities to conserve them.
- Arousing the child's curiosity about people, places and things both near and far away.
- Building an appreciation of the compatibility of cultural differences.
- Inspiring in children a love of country and pride in being an American.
- Learning about social organization and developing a sense of participation and responsibility.
- Helping the child realize the interdependence of family members, economically and socially.

- Sharpening the child's observation of changes in seasons, families, schools and communities.
- Helping the child develop functional skills related to gathering and using information in the social sciences; e.g., listening intently and observing accurately, developing simple map and globe skills, classifying, drawing inferences and making simple generalizations.
- Assisting in the maintenance of a good environment in their classroom, school and playground.

**Skills**

The student—

- Develops habits of good citizenship.
- Exhibits a love of country and pride in being an American.
- Exhibits interest in people, places and things both near and far away.
- Observes traditional American holidays and their historical background, heroes and other historical events.
- Relates school experiences to home and community.

## Health Education

Health education is an integral part of the kindergarten program. Through health education, children have an opportunity to acquire information, skills and attitudes that will help them lead a meaningful life. Health services should be supplied in accordance with children's needs. Some needs are determined by the child's stage of growth; others are related to factors such as illness, accidents or organic disorders. The physical growth of five-year-olds demands activity and exercise, which, in turn, creates a demand for rest. Consequently, kindergarten programs should be planned with alternating periods of vigorous and quiet activity. The main purpose of a kindergarten health program should be to: (1) help maintain or improve the health of each child and (2) help all children establish good health attitudes and habits.

**Safety**: Teachers should watch for and eliminate potential safety hazards, arranging classroom equipment with safety in mind. Because fatigue and overexcitement can often cause carelessness, well-balanced programs of quiet and vigorous activities should be planned. Children should learn how to use apparatus, equipment and materials properly.

**Cleanliness**: Not all children come to school with the same standards for cleanliness. In extreme cases of negligence, teachers should attempt to find out the reasons for poor personal hygiene from the child's home life. Their findings may indicate ways in which assistance may be given. When children are dressed in washable clothing, teachers need not worry excessively about cleanliness; a recommendation to dress children in washable clothes may be made to parents during orientation. Children are free to work and play creatively when they know it is all right to get dirty. The important habits of washing before contacting food, after handling animals and after toileting are not easily acquired; they should be encouraged in the classroom by teachers.

Frequently, it would be simpler for teachers to cleanup after the children than to have them do their own cleaning. The promotion of efficient work habits, however, requires that children be taught to cleanup after themselves before they begin new activities. Teachers should not expect perfection, but keep realistic goals in mind.

**Health**

The student—

- Becomes aware of safe living at home, school and community.
- Demonstrates good physical health practices, i.e., personal hygiene, nutrition, dental care, adequate rest, proper use of medicines and danger of toxic materials.
- Becomes aware of health resources and personnel in the community.

**Posture**: Girls and boys develop muscles which promote good posture as they climb on playground apparatus, relax, sit comfortably for short periods of time, express ideas and emotions through rhythms, wear well-fitted clothing and feel successful and socially accepted. Proper nutrition, exercise and rest contribute to children's feelings of well-being. Teachers should recognize that the normal stance of young children differs from adults and encourage individuals to sit in chairs suited to their size.

**Nutrition**: Ample education concerning nutrition is centered around the few minutes designated as "snack" time. Consequently, only good nutritional foods and beverages should be served. Celery strips, carrot strips, whole wheat crackers, cheese, apples, tomatoes and oranges are better than cookies or crackers. Fruit or vegetable juice is sometimes a welcome change from milk. "Snack" time can also be used to develop good manners, social relationships and personal hygiene habits.

**Mental health**: The kindergarten year is crucial for development of children's self-concepts and their ability to relate well to other people. The following

activities will promote sound mental health among kindergarten children:

- Helping others and receiving help
- Showing appreciation for help received
- Talking about ways of acting when upset
- Playing alone and with various numbers of children
- Enjoying funny situations
- Dramatizing home experiences
- Returning borrowed articles
- Making decisions commensurate with their level of development

**Rest**: Children can learn to relax and rest informally for short periods of time; however, the scheduling of formal rest periods must be determined by the local situation. In some instances, a period of calm activity provides sufficient rest. Some children may need a nap while others play or work quietly. Decisions are made according to such factors as the length of the school day, the distance the children travel to and from school and the quality of their outdoor activity.

## Physical Education

Young children like to play. Play, after all, is a form of work for young children. Lifting large blocks onto a high platform to make a bus is hard work, but it is also play.

The five-year-old grows in physical ability through play. Young bodies are constantly active because muscles and coordination are developing. Climbing, reaching and grasping as children use playground equipment or apparatus helps them gain physical strength and muscular control. The child pulls himself/herself up to the bar with a firm grip of both hands and, by observation, soon learns how to move across the bar. Play on the apparatus is often a series of experiments, observations and imitations.

**Playground safety**: When equipment or apparatus of any kind is used, the teacher must be able to recognize safe play procedures. Since the young child is not conscious of physical safety, the teacher's responsibility is great. Encouraging good coordination in pulling, lifting, pushing, hanging, dropping and stooping will help to minimize injuries.

Instruction in safe and correct use of playground equipment will develop good habits at the outset, rather than require children to change bad habits later. The teacher can watch children as they play and show them the correct handgrip on the horizontal bar, how to sit in the swing or rocker-ride and encourage them to take turns. It is important to give kindergarten children basic understanding of the reasons for waiting turns and using apparatus correctly. Good play habits are valuable at a time when other pressures crowd out learnings which are not yet habits.

**Play supervision**: Guided play is the young child's physical education. Each kindergarten child should be observed and guided when playing alone or with small groups in various activities. Teachers and aides can help individuals with fundamental skills when they need it and are ready, discourage participation in unsafe activities and redirect play activities if a child becomes over-stimulated. Teachers should allow as much freedom and free play as possible without children hurting each other or engaging in unsafe practices. Imitative play and rhythmic expression also have important roles in play activities and physical development.

**Organized games**: There is a lack of agreement on the place of organized games in the kindergarten program. Some kindergartens almost rule out organized games while others have a daily game period. Since there is not adequate research to support either procedure, perhaps kindergarten teachers should run a middle course by having some games without overemphasizing the game period. Since five-year-olds have little understanding of "your side," "my side" and competition, loosely organized games like the circle type seem best suited to them. As the group matures through the year (or if they are already more mature), additional, more highly organized games may be introduced. More group games can be played in situations where playground space and equipment is limited than on playgrounds where ample space and equipment are provided.

### Motor Skills

- Large muscle coordination
  - Exercises and games involving walking, jumping, running, skipping and climbing
- Sensory and motor coordination
  - Imaginative play on jungle gym, slides, trapeze bars, etc.
  - Bouncing, catching, throwing ball alone or cooperatively
  - Easy relays
- Rhythmic activities
  - Singing games
  - Running, skipping, walking, sliding, hopping, etc., to music

### Safety at Play

- Taking turns without pushing, etc.
- Using equipment properly

**Mental Health**

- Developing good sportsmanship and citizenship
- Following rules willingly
- Practicing both leadership and followership
- Demonstrating willingness to try new things
- Appreciating achievements of self and others

**Skills**

The student—

- Knows the rules of organized games.
- Exhibits good sportsmanship.
- Knows the proper use of equipment and apparatus.
- Develops gross and fine motor skills. (See: Physical Skills)

## Art Education

Five-year-olds are explorers; the creative art experiences of kindergarten children should be exploratory in nature. The process is more important than the product at this age.

Five-year-olds have strong desires and real needs to satisfy their sensory urges. They need to be able to touch, feel, look, listen, stamp and jump and to whisper and shout. All of these actions are attempts to become a part of the environment. Because kindergarten children have insatiable curiosity, teachers must provide unlimited opportunities for exploration and examination of different material without overemphasizing the finished product or asking "what is it?"

**Teaching strategies**: The teacher will recognize the sequence of growth in art expression while working with children. Manipulation gives way to basic symbols; later these symbols become more highly differentiated and increasingly comprehensible to the viewer. At no time in kindergarten, however, does the child's work normally resemble that of an adult. Because development cannot be successfully hurried, an adult should not substitute other forms or symbols for those created by the children. Children at this age don't really want help; they want the privilege of exploring with materials and seeing what the material will do.

A teacher must understand the stages of development in art expression; interpret with considerable sensitivity and insight the various forms of expression that children adopt and be able to appreciate the aesthetic qualities that appear in all children's work.

The physical setting and choice of materials for art activities should be carefully planned. The teacher's challenge is to find the necessary, delicate balance between assuming leadership and allowing the children to: develop their own abilities, express their own ideas in their own ways and choose their own media.

**The art center**: Children need to know how to use a new tool—how to hold a paintbrush or scissors. With this knowledge and a little practice, children can then select project materials from the art center. The art center should be changed as frequently as the children's interests change—but not so rapidly that they feel hurried in the use of materials. Convenient work areas and readily accessible tools and materials are as important in the art center as in other work centers of the kindergarten.

**Subject matter**: Children select subjects to paint and choose materials that interest them and are in their experience. Some children are motivated by a good story or poem effectively read by the teacher. Dictatorial methods of motivation, restricting children's thinking and the art forms they may use, retard their normal development. The teacher should always remember that dominating children's ideas, working habits or designs will destroy the educational values inherent in the art education program.

**Work areas**: Work areas with adequate tables, easels and cleanup facilities are essential for creative art experiences. The tables should have smooth washable tops and be of a comfortable work height. The easels can be permanently installed or movable. They should be a convenient height and have a washable finish. A suitable floor covering under the easels and a classroom sink can make cleanup much easier. Sponges may be cut to fit five-year-olds' hands encouraging them to be independent in cleaning up. Either plastic aprons or work aprons of some other material help keep the children's clothes clean and make for freer use of creative art materials.

**Suggested art education purposes:**

- Increase children's awareness of their world
- Prime the child's potential creativity and curiosity
- Increase visual awareness through use of the senses—feeling, touching, looking, etc.
- Encourage self-expression of feelings and ideas in visual language
- Acquaint the child with various materials
- Develop independence and different ways of working with materials
- Encourage the expression of aesthetic feelings about experience
- Teach habits of neatness and good housekeeping
- Develop the ability to listen and follow directions
- Develop the skills needed in art work
- Develop respect for the rights of others and their work
- Appreciate the process as well as the finished product

**Skill activities:**

- Differentiate between colors
- Properly hold and use scissors, paintbrush, crayons, chalk, pencils, etc.
- Choose appropriate materials to meet various art situations
  - Clay and modeling compounds
  - Paper
  - Paints—tempera, watercolor and finger paints
  - Wood and tools
  - Cloth
  - String and yarn
  - Paste—one finger activity
  - Glue—just enough
- Find and use unusual art media
  - Bottles
  - Paper bags
  - Newspapers
  - Sticks
  - Aluminum foil
  - Paper towel rolls

## Music Education

Every day the kindergarten child should experience singing, listening and moving to music. Children will learn concepts of rhythm and melody best through activities that involve bodily movement such as clapping, using rhythm instruments and experimenting with sounds and singing. Major goals of kindergarten music programs are to provide children with: (1) freedom to enjoy and experience music and (2) repeated exposure to a variety of music media.

**Singing**: In kindergarten, singing should be spontaneous and free and will ideally go with children as they leave the classroom. The teacher who is enthusiastic, enjoys singing, knows the songs well and who uses appealing, worthwhile and appropriate materials will achieve good results with children. Five-year-old children can learn a wide variety of songs, including folk songs, action songs, nursery rhymes, child-composed songs, nonsense songs, seasonal music, work songs, lullabies and patriotic songs. In order to insure growth, a planned and balanced singing program should occur daily, with a variety of song material, creative rhythmic experience, appreciation and participation in song games and dances.

Children learn to sing by singing. Kindergarten teachers have found the following steps effective in teaching a song:

- Singing the song as a whole
- Inviting children to join in the song as soon as possible
- Encouraging children to sing easy or repeat phrases
- Devoting several days to learning a song

The teacher can introduce a number of songs concurrently. The interest of children in music is so great that they can become familiar with several new songs each week.

Few kindergarten children are self-conscious about their voices or are aware that they are not singing correctly. Consequently, pointing out a child whose singing is inaccurate may destroy his or her progress and self-confidence. Many children have not yet learned to sing accurately; this does not indicate that they are unmusical, however, only inexperienced or insecure. The best possible activity to help improve singing is actually singing—freely and joyously.

A variety of accompaniment is desirable. The teacher may use autoharps for folk songs, wood blocks and tone blocks for clock songs and black keys at the piano for oriental songs. Many songs will be sung without accompaniment. An overuse of

piano accompaniment will discourage independent singing. Occasionally, recordings or an accompanist may be used in teaching songs.

**Movement**: Along with other forms of expression in language and art, rhythmic movement or dance give great joy. It begins whenever movement takes place—walking, skipping, galloping, bouncing on a board, singing a jingly tune or tapping and whirling for fun. Rhythm is so natural to children that sharing the fun of movement is satisfying to them. If a tune is hummed, a song sung or a simple instrument played, the rhythm experience is enriched. Rhythm does not necessarily have to be accompanied by music, however.

Rhythm activities begin with an individual and may involve a small group and, finally, a large group after many informal experiences have been enjoyed. Exploration and experimentation afford intellectual and creative development as well as emotional release.

**Experimenting with sounds**: The life of a kindergarten child is full of sounds—from the roar of a jet to the chirp of a cricket. Sounds capture children's interest and stimulate their imagination, especially when listening to music at home and at school. Kindergarten programs should provide music of varied styles, periods and composers—enriching musical background and encouraging familiarity with a variety of music.

**Listening**: Quiet listening is a favorite musical activity in the kindergarten and can be planned many times during the day, acquainting children with some of the world's most beautiful music. Piano music can be satisfying for quiet listening. Phonograph records provide resources for broad, rich and varied listening experiences.

Children enjoy concerts heard in the classroom, school auditorium, concert hall and on radio and television. Performances by other children are of particular interest. Any planned concert for children should consider their interests in the choice of music, the length of the composition and the length of the entire program.

**Creating**: A child makes noises with hands, tongue and feet. Using all kinds of sound-makers increases children's ability to recognize variations in tone quality, pitch, duration and rhythm patterns. As children discover that music tones can be produced in many ways, creative expression and interest in playing instruments may be encouraged.

Instruments are closely allied to the natural rhythms of children and encourage creative expression. Consequently, teachers should guide children to express their feelings and ideas with instruments rather than beat out preconceived rhythmic patterns. Children especially enjoy experimenting with rhythm instruments. In selecting instruments, major consideration should be given to quality, tone and durability of materials. Instruments should be purchased individually rather than as a set.

As children experiment with instruments, they may begin to combine a few of them in simple, original arrangements accompanied by the teacher at the piano. Present trends are decidedly away from the formal rhythm band with its rigid patterns, costumes and child director (delighting in the opportunity to show off for admiring adults). This staging and rigidity does not encourage musical development. The kindergarten teacher should work with children's natural interest and help develop a growing, continuing interest in the various aspects of music education.

The kindergarten music program affords the child opportunities to—

- Listen to and enjoy good music.
- Experience the pleasure of group singing.
- Enjoy and learn how to control one's own singing voice.
- Build up a repertoire of songs.
- Develop a feeling for and a sense of rhythm.
- Develop motor coordination and grace.
- Cultivate the ability to pay careful attention.
- Express creative ideas and moods through body movements.
- Develop social habits and cooperation necessary for group appreciation of music.
- Develop ease in performing before a group.

**Music Skills**

- Control and use of singing voice
- Ability to follow short melody accurately
- Recognition of like, different and similar phrases
- Ability to show, with the hand or body, up or down direction of melody
- Recognition of the mood of a song
- Appropriate rhythmic responses to music; i.e., hopping, skipping, marching, running, walking, galloping, gliding, sliding
- Ability to imitate rhythmic patterns by clapping and by using rhythm instruments

- Ability to interpret music creatively in dance, painting, etc.
- Ability to recognize the rhythm instruments used in kindergarten
- Good listening habits

## Mathematics

Mathematics is a way of thinking. It is the ability to see the relationship between objects, experiences (events) or people, and to use this awareness to solve everyday problems. In this way, mathematics is a way of life that fits into every aspect of our being.

Mathematical concepts are internally constructed by the individual. The role of the teacher is to facilitate the child's learning process by creating an environment and providing a wide variety of experiences which lead a child to develop the ability to see and create relationships and the ability to make use of those relationships. The teacher's efforts must be done in a manner appropriate to the developmental learning style of young children. Only after repeated experiences with concrete physical reality through manipulatives can the child develop mathematical concepts and only then can the child begin to apply and use a formal numerical system and develop the skill in using arithmetic functions.

**Mathematic Skills**

- Sequencing
  - Rote count to 20
  - Rationally count to 20
  - Identify numbers to 20
  - Write numerals in order to 10
  - Arrange in ascending and descending order sets of elements from 1 to 10
- Identification
  - Identify one of two sets of elements as the set with more or fewer elements
  - Add two numerals to sums of (5) five or less
  - Associates 0 with an empty set
  - Associates numeral with corresponding group of objects
- Geometry
  - Match like shapes
  - Name a circle, square, rectangle and triangle
  - Identify objects as being "next to," "ahead of" and "last"
  - Identify the inside and outside of a circle
  - Identify the position of objects as being "nearest" and "farthest"
  - Identify "sides" and "corners" of shapes
  - Classify objects by size, shape, or color
- Measurement
  - Discriminate between size and weight
  - Name one-half
  - Tell time on the hour
  - Compare lengths of two objects and identify which is shorter or longer
- Money
  - Identify a penny, nickel, dime and quarter
  - Identify $1, $5 and $10 bills

## Science Education

The young child engages in problem-solving activities quite naturally while trying to understand the "how" and "what" of the environment. Each kindergarten child has already developed a great number of science-related concepts representing diverse experiences in observation, interpretation, organization, evaluation, experimentation, analysis and in making hypotheses, generalizations and comparisons about phenomena in the environment. All children have common understandings of day and night, growth, hot and cold, energy, heat, friction, inertia, plants and animals, weather, sound, electricity and man's accomplishments in space; these concepts form a foundation for extending science knowledge in the classroom.

The teacher does not know, however, what specific ideas the individual child has gained from these experiences or how much awareness has been developed of the cause and effect relationships operating in the environment. The teacher can be sure that some of the concepts the child brings to kindergarten are vague, incomplete and, in some instances, erroneous.

**Kindergarten science programs**: The kindergarten teacher should help the children extend, refine and add to the concepts they possess when they enter kindergarten. Science activities should be planned that enable children to relate present to past learning experiences, broadening their frame of reference and science vocabulary. Unless class learning is clearly connected to what the child already knows, the continuity of learning will not be recognized.

**Teaching strategy**: In planning science experiences for kindergarten children, the teacher should use techniques that: (1) capitalize on teachable moments; (2) use community resources effectively and (3) provide stimulating and appropriate activities with ample opportunity for children to question, explore and experiment.

Questions posed by the child and those asked by the teachers are equally important. The child's ques-

tions reveal areas of interest, past experience and concept development; they also provide the "teachable moments" for the teacher. The teacher's question can direct the child's observations and, at the same time, develop greater perceptual awareness. Being told about science does little to increase perceptual awareness; the teacher's questions, however, can point out what to look for in particular situations, gradually showing the learner how to observe. For example: ask the child to tell what he/she knows about environmental change (night and day, the seasons, plants and animals, etc.); help to organize this information into a meaningful pattern, adding a dimension to the child's awareness of change. New discoveries may be that: (1) environmental change is rhythmic, (2) change can be explained in terms of cause and effect relationships and (3) change is a universal phenomenon.

**Science curriculum**: It is important to plan for two aspects in the science curriculum: (1) observation and description ("what happens") and (2) explanation and interpretation ("where does it happen"). Teachers are cautioned to remember not to move too soon from simple observations into explanations and interpretations.

The child should be involved in a science problem that he or she has identified and chosen as interesting. The teacher should help the child recognize the connection between past and present experiences and provide guidance in making generalizations that will add to concept development in the future.

The skills in science education for young children focus more on process skills than content. Process skills used in kindergarten include:

- Observation
- Exploration
- Experimentation
- Creative thinking
- Representation
- Describing
- Predicting
- Inferring
- Communicating ideas
- Measuring
- Recording

These process skills can be taught through the content of the life, earth and physical sciences.

# State Textbook Adoption Kindergarten

School districts are now required to provide a kindergarten program on or before September 1989. When such programs are operated, ORS 336.095 states in Section 3, "Kindergartens are an integral part of the elementary school."

The elementary instruction program standard 581-22-221 states that "Students in local districts having any combination of grades kindergarten through eight shall by 9/1/76 receive instruction in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health education, physical education, music education and art education." Local boards may grant exemptions when required by students' religious or cultural beliefs or for students with special physical, sensory or other handicaps.

With this background of requirements, the Textbook Commission now includes kindergartens in its textbook adoptions where material is available and applicable.

School districts may opt to use either general total program kits to meet the textbook adoption or use the kindergarten edition of whatever series is used in other primary programs subject by subject in order to meet the textbook requirements.

A list of the adopted textbooks is available from the Oregon State Textbook Commission at the Oregon Department of Education.

## Early Childhood Education

1. **Early Childhood Education**—Educational experiences provided for children during preprimary and primary years, ages three through eight. Includes the program and curriculum in nursery schools, prekindergarten and primary grades K through 3.

2. **Preprimary**—A group or class organized and administered for children during the year or years preceding kindergarten and which provides educational experiences under the direction of professionally qualified teachers.

3. **Nursery School**—(for definition see **Preprimary**). The nursery school may be organized and administered separately from the elementary school.

4. **Preschool**—(see **Preprimary**). A preschool class may be organized as a grade of an elementary school, or as part of a separate facility such as a nursery school.

5. **Prekindergarten**—(see **Preprimary**).

6. **Kindergarten**—A group or class organized for children during the year immediately preceding the first grade, which provides educational experiences under the direction of a professionally qualified teacher. A kindergarten class may be organized as a grade of an elementary school, or it may be organized and administered in a separate facility.

7. **Primary Education**—The entry level, or first division, of an elementary school organization. It usually includes grades K through 3 and is devoted primarily to instruction in fundamental skills and the development of social attitudes necessary for democratic living.

8. **Approved Program**—An education program approved by the Department of Education.

# Standards for the Public School Kindergarten

## Established

(1) The district school board of any common school district may provide kindergarten facilities free of charge for the kindergarten children residing in the district by operating such facilities either singly or jointly with other districts. ORS 336.095

*Commentary*: Under current law, unified and elementary district boards are authorized to operate kindergartens. Under a bill passed by the 1981 legislative session, school district boards are required to offer a kindergarten program by 1989.

## Implemented

Kindergartens may be implemented when a district budget for the kindergarten has been adopted. Local district budget laws apply as for any other elementary grade.

*Commentary*: School boards may authorize a levy election to balance the budget containing a separated kindergarten issue or one included as a portion of the operating fund (General Fund). The local budget law and Department of Revenue administrative rules apply.

## Finance

Programs are financed locally with basic school support reimbursement as a half day program. ORS 327.006, 327.082

*Commentary*: A half day is defined as two and one-half to three and one-half hours of instruction at local district option five days a week. See section on school year for other options.

## Eligibility to Attend

ORS 336.092 defines a kindergartener as "a child in an educational program in the year before entrance to first grade." ORS 336.092

*Commentary*: This is a program definition, not an age definition. It was so written to give school boards the widest possible latitude in establishing local entrance requirements. The first grade entrance law change goes into effect July 1, 1986. Children will be age eligible for first grade if they are six by October 1 in 1986 and by September 1 in 1987. Districts might want to make an administrative change for age eligibility to kindergarten to meet this change in the law. Early entry policies are also permitted at local district option (ORS 339.115).

# Program Development

## Goals

Each school district shall maintain a coordinated K through 12 instructional program. OAR 581-22-211

*Commentary*: The instructional program at any one grade level shall be coordinated with other levels, grades K through 12. Such coordination should occur among levels within a school building and among schools within a district. Expectations for students must be expressed as goals. When classroom teachers at the kindergarten level are involved with the development of the kindergarten goals, more appropriate goal statements and better instructional techniques result.

## Basic Skills Development

The district has a planned program for the basic skills and emphasizes reading, writing and mathematics through at least grade 4. OAR 581-22-402

*Commentary*: Teaching methods appropriate to the learning abilities of young learners are especially important at this age level.

## Assessment and Evaluation

The school district shall assure that educational programs and services support all students as they progress through school. It shall identify each student's educational progress, needs and interests related to basic skills attainment of the knowledge and skills expected of students at each grade, K/1 through 8, and general educational development; provide instruction consistent with the desired achievement considering the needs and interests of each student; maintain student progress records and report educational progress to parents and students at least annually and, as appropriate, in basic skills attainment and general educational development. OAR 581-22-602

*Commentary*: It is not the intent of this standard to require an individualized educational plan (IEP) for each student. However, assessment, diagnosis and prescription are important concepts in the standards. Student progress should be analyzed in relationship to both personal and program goals. A good recordkeeping system and a variety of assessment methods are required. Appropriate methods of assessment may range from teacher judgment through standardized paper-and-pencil tests, depending on their intended uses.

Some form of assessment at the initial entry-level into school is recommended to establish base line data needed for measuring pupil progress. The information is also useful in adjusting the district planning and goals to a specific group of children or a child. Reporting pupil progress to parents may be either oral or written. Some written record of pupil progress in meeting goals is needed in noting a student's progress in fulfilling district graduation requirements.

## Daily Class Size

The school district shall maintain class size which promotes effective practices consistent with the outcomes expected of each program. OAR 581-22-515

*Commentary*: In determining appropriate class size for kindergartens, consideration should be given the maturity of the children and the goals to be attained. Children at this age need much individual attention as they learn to work and play in a group. It is expected that class sizes will reflect general practices in the state and significant variances may indicate the intent of this standard is not being met. A desirable ratio is 1:24. With supportive assistance the ratio might be higher. OAR 581-22-502

## School Year

For basic school support purposes a kindergarten school year is at least 175 days, five days a week, two and one-half to three and one-half hours a day unless a specific waiver is granted by the Standards Section of the Department and recommended by Superintendent of Public Instruction to the State Board for its approval. OAR 581-22-502

*Commentary*: A two and one-half to three and one-half hour instructional day at local district option makes up a half day. When the day is lengthened by long bus runs or waiting for a bus, recess during the day or recreational activities should be provided.

Chapter 74, 1981 legislative session authorized school boards to establish before- and after-school care under the supervision of noncertificated staff. A fee may be charged to pay for this service.

## Personnel

Classroom Teachers: (2) "No hiring or written contract of any teacher is valid unless the teachers, on or before the date of employment is to begin, hold a valid teaching certificate." ORS 342.505

Teacher Aides: Teacher aides may be used. Any district employing teacher aides shall follow applicable Oregon administrative rules. OAR 581-37-005 through -030

*Commentary*: Many kindergarten teachers now also meet the requirements for an early childhood specialty endorsement; desirable but is not required.

## Curriculum

All students in each grade through grade 6 shall be instructed in art, health education, language arts including reading and writing, mathematics, music, physical education, science and social studies.

Instruction in grades K through 8 shall provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for high school study.

Career education is also part of the curriculum at all grade levels, K through 8. OAR 581-22-420, -405

*Commentary*: Public schools use a subject matter model in curriculum planning and scheduling in order to meet this standard. Note that this standard relates to curriculum planning. Of course, teachers should and can use a variety of instructional methods appropriate to the age level of kindergarten children in meeting this standard and the educational goals.

## Textbooks

Each school district shall provide textbooks and other instructional materials as required by Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules and which contribute to the attainment of district and program goals. OAR 581-22-520

*Commentary*: Public school kindergartens can meet the textbook law by selecting the kindergarten level material in the series of texts used by the rest of the primary grades or by using the basal program selected by the Textbook Commission as an all-purpose (basal) program. Teachers may also seek the use of an independently-adopted text by using the procedure set up for this purpose. Contact the administrative assistant to the Textbook Commission for the necessary form, Oregon Department of Education, Salem, Oregon 97310-0290 or telephone 378-3610.

## KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

**YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT!** After you read and examine this publication, please forward your comments to the publications staff of the Oregon Department of Education. If you would rather talk by telephone, call us at 378-8274. Or, for your convenience, this response form is provided.

**PLEASE RESPOND** so that your views can be considered as we plan future publications. Simply cut out the form, fold and mail it back to us. We want to hear from you!

Did you read this publication?

___ Completely
___ More than half
___ Less than half
___ Just skimmed

Does this publication fulfill its purpose as stated in the preface or introduction?

___ Completely
___ Partly
___ Not at all

Did you find this publication useful in your work?

___ Often
___ Sometimes
___ Seldom
___ Never

Which section is most valuable? _____
_____

What type of work do you do?

___ Classroom teacher
___ Consultant to classroom teachers
___ School administrator
___ Other _____

Would you recommend this publication to a colleague?

___ Yes, without reservations
___ Yes, with reservations
___ No
___ Other _____

Did you find the content to be stated clearly and accurately?

___ Always yes
___ In general, yes
___ In general, no
___ Always no
___ Other _____

Were the contents presented in a convenient format?

___ Very easy to use
___ Fairly easy
___ Fairly difficult
___ Very difficult
___ Other _____

Did you find this publication to be free of discrimination or biased content towards racial, ethnic, cultural, handicapped, and religious groups, or in terms of sex stereotyping?

___ Yes, without reservations
___ Yes, with reservations
___ No
___ Other _____

What is your impression of the overall appearance of the publication (graphic art, style, type, etc.)?

___ Excellent
___ Good
___ Fair
___ Poor

When this publication is revised, what changes would you like to see made? _____
_____
_____
_____

Additional comments. (Attach a sheet if you wish.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Thanks!

Fold here and tape

NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**
FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO. 168 SALEM, OREGON

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

940.01 44-502

**Oregon Department of Education**
ATTENTION: Publications
700 Pringle Parkway SE
Salem, Oregon 97301-9984

Fold here and tape
Do Not Staple